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WESTERN KENTUCKY STATE COLLEGE
BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
OGDEN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

April 8, 1966

MEMORANDUM TO - President Thompson
Vice President Raymond Cravens
Vice-President Dero G. Downing

SUBJECT: The Agriculture Department at Western -- Present and Future --
Summary Statement

This memorandum is intended to serve as a starting point for discussions concerning the educational program in agriculture at Western with emphasis given to a concise statement of the objectives of the program and a brief discussion of the faculty and staff needs to develop and continue to improve the present program. I believe that the goals for the agricultural program should be:

1. A continuing development of an outstanding undergraduate program in the agricultural sciences and related curricula such as vocational agriculture, agri-business, pre-veterinary medicine, pre-forestry, etc.
2. The extensive and efficient utilization of available farm and lab facilities for the benefit and enrichment of the educational programs in agriculture. Needs and opportunities of both students and faculty should be kept in mind at all times.
3. The establishment of research and development activities commensurate with the needs of the academic program and relevant to the agricultural industry of this region.
4. Improved working relationship with the agricultural interests of the region.
5. A greater cooperative relationship with the University of Kentucky for the benefit of both institutions and those served by these institutions.

I have given considerable time and attention during recent months to a study of national and international trends in agriculture, particularly as they relate to education and training in agriculture. The general consensus of opinion among so-called authorities in agriculture economics and the agriculture sciences is that the agriculture industry in the United States is on the threshold of a great boom with surpluses likely to disappear overnight.

primarily as a result of our increasing involvement in international food problems. It is generally recognized that employment opportunities, particularly in the areas of agri-business, agricultural research, and agricultural technology will be on the increase. Some think that there will be considerable need for sending well-trained men to other countries to assist them in the healthy development of their agricultural programs. In addition, more well-trained specialists with a strong background in the fundamental sciences will be needed at the local level as certain aspects of farm operations approach the computer stage in the near future, with a more direct involvement of science and agriculture at the local a certainty.

Comparative studies of the intensity of land use for Kentucky including this region reveal that major states, such as Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, are far ahead in the per-acre productivity of the equivalent land types. The state government is becoming increasingly cognizant of the problems of land productivity in this state and accordingly is becoming more active in the drive toward better productivity.

First of all, surveys show that the matter-energy yield from plants on much of our land is considerably below what it should be. This means that feed production through the enlightened use of the latest field crop practices is basic to the problems of this region. The agriculture department at Western can do much to lead by example in this area. In addition, I am informed that this region is well suited to the fruit-growing industry.

On the other hand, although plant production is basic, the best over-all economy in this region can be realized with emphasis on animal production. Since the plant production phase is essential to avoid the import of feed in developing an outstanding animal industry, it would seem that the plant and animal sciences are about equally important to the region and should be considered as such in establishing our basic guidelines for the course of future activities in our agriculture program at Western.

The major needs for professional experience in the agriculture department at the present time are as follows:

First, we need an agriculture department head who satisfies an almost staggering list of criteria of character, personality, education, and training. His particular field of specialization is probably secondary to his over-all administrative ability and qualities of leadership. With regard to technical specialties, the department at the present has four men in the animal sciences one man in the plant sciences, one agricultural economist, and one part-time man (Dean Hourigan) in the soil sciences. Our greatest staff needs for technical balance are in the areas of soil sciences and agronomy.

Mr. Henry Amós plans to return to graduate school probably in February or September, 1967. If he obtains an assistantship offer to work under one of the world's leading authorities, he states that he might depart by September 1966. In addition to the headship we definitely need one key man each in plant and animal sciences who can provide strong leadership in both agriculture education and research. There are numerous opportunities to obtain financial assistance from federal agencies probably some state support and contract work with industries. The department head could provide leadership in one of these areas.

I believe that the question of the development of a graduate program in agriculture should be considered only after the successful establishment of research and development activities which benefit the undergraduate program and the local region.



M. W. Russell, Dean
Ogden College of Science and Technology

MWR:mlh